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# Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04

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R 230905Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3623
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOGADISCIO 0324

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, SO, ET
SUBJ: REORGANIZATION OF WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT

REF: A. MOGADISCIO 1793 DEC. 22, 1975; B. MOGADISCIO 0024, C. MOGADISCIO 0060

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED RELIABLE REPORTS THAT SOMALI GOVERNMENT HAS REORGANIZED WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT AFTER SEVERAL YEARS INACTIVITY AND, DURING MUCH OF 1975, IMPRISONMENT OF MANY OF ITS LEADERS. REORGANIZATION TOOK PLACE IN JANUARY, 1976, AND WAS INTENDED NOT ONLY TO REACTIVATE FRONT BUT TO MAKE ITS LEADERSHIP A MORE EFFECTIVE TOOL OF SDR POLICY. WHILE IT IS PREMATURE TO DRAW ANY CONCLUSIONS AS TO EFFECTIVENESS OF REORGANIZATION OR ITS PRIMARY PURPOSE -- AND WE DO NOT RPT BELIEVE THAT LATTER WAS PRIMARILY TO MAKE FRONT MORE EFFECTIVE GUERRILLA FORCE -- IT WAS APPARENT DURING SESSIONS THAT SERIOUS DIFFERENCES REMAIN BETWEEN OGADEN TRIBAL ELDERS AND PRESIDENT SIAD.

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2. FOR PAST MONTH, EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED FRAGMENTARY REPORTS

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THAT PRESIDENT SIAD ORGANIZED A MEETING OF OGADEN TRIBESMEN IN MOGADISCIO AREA IN EARLY JANUARY 1976. WE NOW HAVE PIECED TOGETHER REPORTS FROM THREE WHOLLY INDEPENDENT LOCAL SOURCES WHICH SEEM TO CONFIRM FACT THAT MEETING OF OGADEN TRIBESMEN DID TAKE PLACE NEAR MOGADISCIO, THAT SIAD HIMSELF SPENT SOME FIVE HOURS WITH PARTICIPANTS, AND THAT NEW EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WAS ELECTED. FOLLOWING ARE PRINCIPAL DETAILS AS OBTAINED FROM INDEPENDENT LOCAL SOURCES.

3. ON JANUARY 10, AND 11TH, TRIBAL ELDERS -- PRINCIPALLY DAROD -- REPRESENTING OGADEN SUBTRIBES BEGAN ASSEMBLING IN MOGADISCIO FROM NORTHERN AND BORDER REGIONS, SOME BROUGHT BY PLANE AT SDR EXPENSE FROM HARGEISA. AT SAME TIME, SOMALI OFFICIALS BEGAN INFORMING LOCAL OGADEN TRIBES-MEN EMPLOYED IN LOCAL BUSINESSES THAT THEY WERE TO TAKE LEAVE FROM THEIR EMPLOYERS TO PARTICIPFWE IN GENERAL MEETING OF OGADEN TRIBES. IN AT LEAST ONE CASE, SOME OF LOCAL OGADEN WORKERS HAD BEEN EMPLOYED FOR YEARS WITH FOREIGN EMPLOYERS AND HAD HAD NO RPT NO CONTACT WITH OGADEN ACTIVITS. WE ASSUME THAT AT SAME TIME SDR WAS ALSO ROUNDING UP SDR CIVIL SERVANTS FROM SAME TRIBES IN EFFORT TO CREATE PRO-SIAD CAUCUS WHICH MIGHT EFFECTIVELY CONTROL MEETINGS AND NULLIFY INFLUENCE OF MORE CONSERVATIVE TRIBAL ELDERS WHO HAVE LITTLE SYMPATHY FOR SIAD OR HIS GOVERNMENT.

4. MEETING OF OGADEN TRIBES THUS TOOK PLACE AT UANLE UEN WEST OF AFGOI SECOND AND THIRD WEEKS OF JANUARY. NEW TWENTY OR TWENTY-FOUR MAN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE WAS ELECTED (REPORTS VARY AS TO ITS SIZE) AND ENTIRE GROUP WAS LECTURED ON SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM BY SRC MEMBER OMAR JESS, BY REGIONAL CHAIRMAN FROM NORTHWEST REGION AND BY THE COMMANDER OF HALANE ORIENTATION CENTER WHICH IS THE SDR'S PRINCIPLE INDOCTRINATION SCHOOL AND STAFFED WITH SOVIET-EDUCATED SOMALIS. ON FINAL DAY OF MEETINGS, WHICH LASTED FIVE TO SIX DAYS, SIAD VISITED UANLE UEN AND LECTURED ENTIRE GROUP.

5. SIAD REPORTEDLY TOLD OGADEN TRIBESMEN OF HIS FRUITLESS ATTEMPTS IN ADDIS TO GET EPMG LEADERS AND PMAC CHAIRMAN TEFERA BANTI TO DISCUSS OGADEN ISSUE. HE THEN TOLD HIS CONFIDENTIAL

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LISTENERS THAT PMAC WAS SO DEEPLY DIVIDED THAT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DISCUSS ANY SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE. ETHIOPIA WAS VIRTUALLY LEADERLESS AS A RESULT. SIAD REPORTEDLY ENDED HIS SPEECH BY EXHORTING OGADEN GROUP TO CARRY PRINCIPLES OFMSSCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM INTO ITS BATTLE IN OCCUPIED AREAS AND TO STRUCTURE ITS ADMINISTRATIVE AND GUERRILLA ORGANIZATION ALONG SOCIALIST LINES.

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6. ALTHOUGH SIAD SCHEDULED TO SPEAK FOR ONLY HOUR OR SO, HE SPENT SOME FIVE HRS WITH GROUP, MUCH OF IT IN DISCUSSION OF OGADEN TRIBES' COMPLAINTS AGAINST SDR AND SIAD. OGADEN LEADERS TOLD SIAD BLUNTLY THAT THEIR CAUSE HAD NOT RPT NOT BEEN AIDED BY SDR AND NO RPT NO PROGRESS MADE SINCE REGIME TOOK POWER IN 1969. WE HAVE REPORTS THAT SIAD WAS ALSO TOLD THAT OGADEN PEOPLES' MOST IMMEDIATE GOAL WAS NOT RPT NOT IMPLEMENTATION OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM BUT LIBERATION OF OCCUPIED LANDS AND THEY WERE INTERESTED SOLELY IN QUICKEST MEANS TO THIS END. WE ALSO INFORMED THAT IN ADDITION TO BITTER VERBAL EXCHANGES, SOMEHOF SIAD'S CANDIDATES DID NOT RPT NOT FARE AS IN EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ELECTION EITHER. NEW SECRETARY WAS NOT RPT NOT SDR CHOICE FOR OFFICE.

7. SIAD'S ATTEMPT TO REORGANIZE WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT COMES THREE MONTHS AFTER RELEASE OF ITS PRINCIPAL SPOKESMAN AND MANY OF ITS LEADERS FROM PRISON. IN MONTHS FOLLOWING THEIR RELEASE, DEMORALIZED FRONT LEADERS CALLED QUIETLY ON ARAB MISSIONS IN MOGADISCIO AND BEGGED FOR FINANCIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT. THEY REPORTED AT THE TIME THAT THEY WERE CLOSELY WATCHED BY SOMKPI NSS OFFICIALS, CONFINED TO MOGADISCIO AND TOTALLY CUT OFF FROM SDR FWFDS OR POLITICAL SUPPORT. AT APPROXIMATELY SAME TIME, NUMBER OF OGADEN TRIBESMEN WERE SENT TO USSR FOR TRAINING. THESE TRIBESMEN REPORTEDLY RETURNED FROM USSR IN LATE DECEMBER OR EARLY JANUARY -- THAT IS, PRIOR TO SDR-SPONSORED MEETING UANLE UEN(SEE MOGADISCIO 0060).

8. WE HAVE REPORTS THFW SINCE FIRST OF YEAR SIAD HAS ALSO REORGANIZED LEADERSHIP OF SOMALI COAST LIBERATION FRONT (FLCS) IN ATTEMPT TO RID MOVEMENT OF THOSE SOMALIS WHO WERE SUSPECTED OF PUTTING SELF-DETERMINATION FOR DJIBOUTI ABOVE THEIR LOYALTY TO MOGADISCIO'S INTERESTS.
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9. IN REORGANIZATION OF WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT, SIAD INTENDS NO DOUBT TO MAKE BETTER USE OF HIS LOCAL RESOURCES IN KEEPING PRESSURE ON ETHIOPIANS. A MORE ACTIVE OGADEN LIB FRONT WOULD ALSO HELP HIM DOMESTICALLY. WE WOULD SUPPOSE WO SAME TIME HOWEVER THAT HTERE ARE LIMITS TO HIS PLANS FOR GENUINE MOBILIZATION OF OGADEN TRIBES. WHILE ENCOURAGING THEM RHETORICALLY TO CARRY THE FIGHT TO OGADEN AREAS, HE MUST ALSO MAKE SURE THAT THEY REMAIN AN INSTRUMENT OF SOMALI POLICY -- LIKE FLCS IN DJIBOUTI -- AND THAT THEY DO NOT RPT NOT PURSUE THEIR OWN INTERESTS INDEPENDENTLY OF OR AT THE EXPENSE OF SIAD AND THE SDR. RISK SIAD RUNS IN FURNISHING OGADEN PEOPLES WITH ARMS IS THAT THOSE ARMS CAN BE USED EITHER AGAINST SDR OR IN OTHER WAYS AGAINST SOMALI INTERESTS. HIS COMMITMENT TO THEIR SUPPORT CANNOT BE

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OPEN-ENDED.

10. SOVIET ROLE IN TRAINING OF OGADEN LEADERS, AS WELL AS IDEOLOGICAL CONTENT OF UANLE UEN MEETING, SUGGEST TO US THAT SIAD IS PROCEEDING CAUTIOUSLY AND THAT HIS FIRST CONCERN IN REORGANIZING FRONT IS TO REINFORCE POLITICAL CONTROL OF OGADEN PEOPLES MOBLIZED TO LIBERATE THEIR TERRITORY. WE WOULD THEREFORE VIEW REORGANIZATION EFFORT AS PRIMARILY A POLITICAL RATHER THAN MILITARY MOVE. PRESENCE OF HALANE COMMANDER AT INITIAL SESSION SUGGESTS TO US THAT NEW ORGANIZATION MAY BE RATHER HEAVY ON IDEOLOGICAL INDOCTRINATION AND SOMEWHAT SHORT ON INSURGENCY ACTION. SOVIET AMBASSADOR SAMSONOV RECENTLY TOLD US THAT SIAD HAD NOT RPT NOT CHANGED HIS HANDS-OFF POLICY TOWARDS ETHIOPIA (MOGADISCIO 200). REORGANIZATION OF WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT HOWEVER AS CONDUIT FOR INDOCTRINATION OF OGADEN ACTIVITY AS TO SIAD'S PARTY LINE WOULD BE A DECISION WHICH WE SUSPECT SOVIETS COULD SUPPORT -- AND PROBABLY HAVE.
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